

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 ICAE-00 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 H-01
DODE-00 PM-05 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 /078 W
-----073409 181534Z /46

O 181512Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1782
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4073

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: SMITH APPEALS TO NKOMO

1. ON THE 13TH OF JULY IAN SMITH ADDRESSED A PRIVATE
INTER-RACIAL BUSINESSMEN'S CLUB IN SALISBURY (THE REFORM
CLUB). ALTHOUGH THE MEETING WAS NOT PUBLICIZED, WHAT SMITH HAD
TO SAY WAS NOT KEPT PRIVATE VERY LONG. ACCORDING TO AN AFRICAN
MEMBER OF ZAPU, SMITH MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:
A. HE WAS DISAPPOINTED IN HIS COLLEAGUES ON THE
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL WHO HAVE NOT KEPT THEIR PROMISE TO
END THE WAR AFTER THE MARCH 3RD AGREEMENT WAS REACHED.
B. THE WAR WAS GETTING WORSE RATHER THAN BETTER.
C. NKOMO WAS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE PICTURE.
HIS PRESENCE WAS NECESSARY IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.
D. SMITH WAS IN REGULAR, ALMOST DAILY, CONTACT WITH NKOMO
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AND THERE WAS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY THAT HE WOULD
RETURN TO JOIN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT. SMITH WAS
CHALLENGED ON THIS POINT BY A MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE.
E. MUGABE COULD RETURN WITH NKOMO IF THEY WISHED.

2. COMMENT: SMITH WELL KNEW THAT HIS COMMENTS WOULD FIND
THEIR WAY TO NKOMO VERY SOON. HE IS CLEARLY MAKING

A PERSONAL APPEAL TO THE ZAPU LEADER. HOWEVER, HE HAS SO FAR GIVEN NO INDICATION THAT HE IS PREPARED TO MAKE THE KINDS OF COMPROMISES WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR NKOMO TO ACCEPT HIS INVITATION TO RETURN. AS LONG AS HE CONTINUES TO INSIST ON MAINTAINING THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT, EVEN PERSONAL APPEALS OF THIS KIND WILL BE UNAVAILING. HOWEVER, THEY DO GIVE AN INDICATION OF THE GROWING DESIRE BY SMITH TO LOOK FOR A NEW SOLUTION AND THEY SHOW A GROWING FLEXIBILITY ON HIS PART.
EDMONDSON

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